

## ABSTRACT

A removable core for supporting a pre-stretched elastomeric tube in a radially expanded condition formed from a unitary tube having first and second opposite ends and at least one primary line of localized weakening starting at the first end and terminating at the second end of the tube, and a plurality of substantially parallel secondary lines of localized weakening. Each secondary weakening line extends substantially circumferentially of the tube from the at least one primary weakening line at the one side thereof to a termination point at the other side of the at least one primary weakening line and spaced apart therefrom. Adjacent secondary weakening lines alternately extend from different sides of the at least one primary weakening line to termination points at the respective other side of the at least one primary weakening line to define at least one strip. This strip begins at the first end of the tube and substantially continues circumferentially in a serpentine manner to the second end of the tube, wherein the at least one strip comprises a free end starting from the second end of the tube and extending through the tube so as to project from the first end of the tube.